

NORTH SHORE ARTS ASSOCIATION 2020 ANNUAL MEETING, PRESIDENTS REPORT

September 2019 to August 2020

I want to thank the current members of the Board of Trustees who have worked together tirelessly this year to guide NSAA thru this extraordinary time and for agreeing to give another year of service to NSAA in order to assure our return to business in what will become the “New Normal”.

I also want to thank Linda Cote for agreeing, without a moment’s hesitation, to go back to working full time during the pandemic and for her willingness not just to stick with us but to help guide us to a new way of doing business in the future.

And finally, I want to thank all of the members of NSAA who have remained steadfast and supportive of NSAA throughout this difficult time. Your patience, understanding and kind words have helped more than you can imagine as each of us have done our best to meet our responsibility to safeguard NSAA.

In order to explain where we are today, I need to start at the end of 2019. The NSAA Board was looking forward to 2020. We started work on the 2020 Exhibition calendar and an Auction Committee was formed to start work on the 2020 Auction. Two committees were formed to start updating the By-Laws and Policy Book. Linda had expressed a desire to semi-retire, so we were working with her and the staff on scheduling options for 2020.

By the beginning of 2020 the calendar was set to include several special events including one or two plein air events and there were plans to repeat the highly successful “And So It Goes” joint exhibition for the Associate and Artist members at the end of the season. Everyone was enthused about the new plans for the Annual Auction, a totally new approach for a Gala Event. We were scheduled to be part an after hours Culture Fest the City of Gloucester had organized. We were going to offer visitors the chance to watch several artist demo’s at once and the opportunity for people of all ages to grab a paintbrush and add to a free-style painting on a huge canvas banner. NSAA’s was also scheduled to host our first Chamber of Commerce after hours event in October. We began discussing ways to prepare for our 100 year Anniversary celebration, everything from improving the gallery exhibition spaces to sprucing up the exterior with new landscaping.

One of the things I was particularly excited about was a series of art critiques we had planned for the summer, open free to all NSAA members and for a minimal fee to non-members, who we hoped might be inspired to become a member.

At our March Board meeting Chris Griffith from Gloucester Stage came to make a presentation for how to form a marketing plan, something we all agreed we desperately needed. We left the meeting with a survey Chris had given us as our “homework assignment”. Less than 2 weeks later the Governor announced all non-essentials businesses were closed and everyone was asked to stay home.

We soon realized that in the absence of a physical presence we needed to provide our members with some way to exhibit their work and participate in juried shows. This effort to quickly build and maintain a juried online gallery for NSAA fell squarely on Linda Cote’s shoulders, and her dreams of semi-retirement went out the window. It also became clear that our website was not well adapted for a predominantly online presence. We needed a new interactive website that could offer things like quick & easy online sales, instant access to individual artist biographies, event ticket sales and member services and much, much more.

With the 100 year Anniversary coming up we agreed that we needed help to get us from “Life with COVID-19” to a “100 Year Celebration in 2022”. So work has begun on a strategic plan to incorporate a Marketing/Budget Plan and a new website, grant applications to fund much needed renovations, and special events to help us develop a Regional & National first class identity as part of celebrating our 100 year anniversary.

Stay Tuned.